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Federal Government Update - 2.6.26 [1]

February 6, 2026 by Riley Black [2]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find a federal government update from our teams.

Government Funding Update
The President signed [3] the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026* (P.L. 119-75 [4]) into law on Feb. 3, ending the partial government shutdown that began on Jan. 30. The legislation funds the Departments of Education (ED), Health and Human Services (HHS), War (DoW), Transportation (DOT) and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through Sept. 30, 2026. It also temporarily extends funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through Feb. 13.

The House passed the legislation by a vote of 217–214 [5] on Feb. 3, while the Senate approved [6] the legislation by a vote of 71-29 [6] on Jan. 30. Congressional leaders are currently negotiating the DHS bill, with Democrats calling for reforms to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents due to recent events in Minnesota.

Congress has now enacted 11 out of the 12 annual appropriations bills and funded approximately 96 percent of the federal government for the remainder of fiscal year (FY) 2026. A detailed summary of CU priorities in the *Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior Environment Appropriations Act, 2026* can be found here [7]. A detailed summary of CU's priorities in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026* can be found here [8].

OPM Releases Final Rule Regarding Classification of Federal Workers
The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) finalized a rule [9] on Feb. 5 that reclassifies federal employees in "policy-related" positions as political appointees rather than career officials. The final rule implements directives contained in the Jan. 20, 2025, executive order, *Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service* [10]. Reclassified employees will become an "at-will employees," allowing for their termination at any time, instead of going through the U.S. Office of Special Counsel for review. The new policy is effective March 8. As many as 50,000 federal employees could be impacted, reports [11] *Government Executive*.

White House Seeks $1 Billion Settlement from Harvard
The President announced [12] in a social media post on Feb. 2 that the government will seek a $1 billion settlement from Harvard over the university's failure to address alleged campus antisemitism.

The announcement follows a tentative agreement unveiled by the President in September 2025, reports [13] *Politico*. The federal administration previously froze $2 billion in federal funds and threatened the university's ability to enroll international students; however, a federal judge ruled in Harvard's favor in September 2025, reversing the funding freeze and allowing continued enrollment of international students.

The Federal Relations and General Counsel teams are actively monitoring developments at the federal level. We are working closely with the President and Chancellors, as well as the Colorado congressional delegation to champion CU priorities. We are committed to keeping you informed. Please visit the CU System Federal Updates and Actions page [14] for up-to-date communications and federal memos.

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